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ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to discover whether existing practices for evaluating instruction are intended to help elementary school teachers improve student learning. The study examined similarities and differences in the perceptions of teachers and principals about teacher evaluation and analyzed the degrees to which evaluation of instruction is intended to provide information teachers may use to increase student learning. Perceptions about whether evaluation is effective in improving student learning were also studied, and ideas about changes to make evaluation more meaningful were elicited. Two samples of elementary schools were used. One consisted of 34 schools, "general Schools," selected at random. The other included five demographically different schools affiliated with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Advancement in Learning, "Target Schools." Interviews were conducted with teachers and principals in the target schools. Overall, teacher evaluations were perceived as a means for accountability, teacher effectiveness, and the improvement of curriculum. Only 7 of 39 principals believed that the purpose of teacher evaluation was to improve student achievement and enhance student learning. Teachers and principals from the target schools were more aware of improvement of student learning as a goal.Teacher attitudes about evaluation procedures and some recommendations for the improvement of evaluation were noted. (Contains 64 references.)(SLD)

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IMPROVING TEACHER EVALUATION FOR INCREASING STUDENT LEARNING

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Improving Teacher Evaluation for Increasing Student Learning

Perspective

In too many classrooms across the United States, there are students who are not succeeding in their learning (Sinclair & Ghory, 1997). Of course, there are various reasons why these students are disconnected from productive learning. No matter what these reasons may be, public schools are still responsible for helping children of all families learn well. Simply put, one powerful way for school people to meet this responsibility is to improve teaching that will in turn increase student learning (Darling-Hammond, 1986).

This research is based on the premise that evaluation of instruction is a powerful means for improving teaching which, in turn, may increase learning (Tyler, 1993). It is reasonable to suggest that through effective evaluation the improvement of teaching and learning can be enhanced. To strengthen the association between evaluation of instruction and student learning, it is highly desirable for school principals to use evaluation as a means for helping teachers create environments that improve learning of all students. By strengthening evaluation, then, it is possible to improve instruction and through better instruction it is possible to increase learning, particularly for students who are not benefiting fully from their school experiences (Sinclair & Ghory, 1987).

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to discover whether existing practices for evaluating instruction are intended to help elementary school teachers improve student learning. The research is guided by four interrelated objectives:

- To determine similarities and differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the major purposes of evaluating instruction.
- To elicit changes teachers and principals suggest for making evaluation of instruction in their local schools more meaningful.
- To analyze degrees to which evaluation of instruction is intended to provide information that teachers may use to increase student learning.
- To identify similarities and differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the current effectiveness of evaluation in helping teachers improve student learning.

Methods of Inquiry

Two samples of elementary schools are utilized in the study. The first consists of 34 schools randomly selected from all elementary schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These schools are designated as *General Schools*. The second includes five demographically different elementary schools affiliated with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Advancement in Learning (MCAL). These five schools allowed the researchers to do in-depth interviews with teachers and principals committed to long-term improvements for increasing student learning. They are considered *Target Schools*. To accomplish the four specific research objectives, a principal and teacher survey, negotiated teacher contracts and teacher evaluation instruments are used to acquire data. A pilot test was conducted to refine the survey before it was used in the study. Also, about 30 hours of interviews were conducted with Target School principals and teachers to gain insight into evaluation as a means for improving teaching and increasing learning. Principals and teachers from thirty-nine elementary schools in Massachusetts provided data for the research. Five sources of data were used to answer the research questions.

Educational Importance of the Study

This study is important because it provides teachers and principals with information about the strengths and weaknesses of current teacher evaluations. The resulting data may be used to make constructive changes in the evaluation of instruction. The study uses perceptions as a comparative way to better determine the differences between what teachers perceive and principals perceive as the major purposes of teacher evaluation and the current effectiveness of evaluation of instruction as a means for increasing student learning. This study is of value because it provides educators with specific directions for using evaluation to improve teacher effectiveness. Resulting data can be used to consider the significance and complexity of teacher evaluation in helping to improve learning of all children, including those who are on the margins of successful school experiences. The study shows that it is the joint responsibility of principals and teachers to create conditions conducive to helping all children learn well in schools. The study, then, has theoretical importance because it examines the extent to which current practices of evaluation are intended to improve student learning. Also, it provides insight into major purposes of teacher evaluation and the effectiveness of evaluation for improving learning. The study has practical importance because it offers recommended changes in teacher evaluation that can be used in local schools to strengthen teaching

and increase learning.

Major Findings for Research Objective 1:

To determine similarities and differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the major purposes of evaluating instruction.

An analysis of the responses from 34 *General School* principals, 5 *Target School* principals and 42 teachers showed the following findings regarding the major purposes of teacher evaluation.

Accountability

Twenty-one principals (61.7%) from *General Schools* stated that the major purposes of teacher evaluation are to ensure accountability, meet contract requirements, and make personnel decisions. While two principal from *Target Schools* believed that evaluation was to ensure accountability and to satisfy contractual obligation, three others took it as an opportunity to get first hand knowledge of the teacher's delivery of curriculum and collect information to help make informed decisions regarding teacher contract renewal.

Twenty-two teachers (52.38%) considered accountability as one major purpose for teacher evaluation. Sixteen teachers (38.1%) stated that teacher evaluation was to monitor teacher effectiveness. Nine teachers (21.43%) considered teacher evaluation as an annual process required by the contract or by the state.

Teacher Growth

Thirty principals (88.23%) from *General Schools* considered teachers' professional growth among the most important purposes of teacher evaluation.. Three principals (60%) and twenty-one teachers (50%) from *Target Schools* listed professional development on their priority list of purposes for teacher evaluation. The written documents clearly showed that teacher improvement is one major purpose of evaluation in all five schools.

Improving Curriculum and Instruction

A third priority of *General School* principals was to improve curriculum and instruction. Fifteen principals (44%) indicated that this was one of the most important purposes of teacher evaluation.

All five *Target School* principals (100%) agreed that evaluation was a process to highlight strengths, determine weakness, and provide feedback regarding instructional practice. All forty-two teachers (100%) concurred with their principals that one purpose of teacher evaluation was to improve instruction.

Student Learning

Only 7 (20.59%) out of 34 *General School* principals considered enhancing student learning as an important purpose of evaluation. This is a major difference that divides *General School* principals from *Target School* principals and teachers. Three *Target School* principals (60%) and forty-two teachers (100%) stressed the importance of improvement of student learning, connecting instruction and student learning.

Major Findings for Research Objective 2:

To elicit changes teachers and principals suggest for making evaluation of instruction in their local schools more meaningful

Principals and teachers offered the following recommendations for changes in teacher evaluation to make it more effective and meaningful in their local schools.

Peer Coaching

Twenty-five principals (73.5%) of the *General Schools*, two principals (40%) and fourteen teachers (33.3%) from *Target Schools* advocated using alternative ways to evaluate teachers, of which peer coaching was the most popular. Principals and teachers called for a team evaluation approach, asking for more involvement of veteran teachers to provide direct feedback. Teachers needed to come out of their classroom and embrace peer observation and collaboration. They needed to work together implementing and coordinating consistent school wide curriculum, learn new strategies, experiment and share results. The process would improve peer-mentoring relationships and general improvement in school climate would translate into greater trust in the process.

Goal Setting

Goal setting was another important recommendation from principals and teachers. They believed that evaluation and goals of clinical supervision would be complimentary. Principals and teachers

would agree on priorities for clinical supervision, and provide improvement plans with specific goals and timelines. Principals suggested having "off years" to focus on personal goals and self-evaluation. Teachers recommended goal setting in making the evaluation practice more effective.

Student Learning

Ten teachers, together with one principal from the *Target Schools*, focused more on student learning in their recommendations. Teachers need to learn from constructive suggestions and implement them in the classroom to make sure that all students learn.

Frequent Classroom Visits

Teachers liked more frequent, unannounced classroom visits to see what was happening in the classroom. The visits could be brief and informal. They felt that the principal should observe teachers more often. The principal usually visits a classroom for 45 minutes and then fills in an annual form to file as summary of a teacher's annual performance.

Evaluation and Feedback from More Sources

Teachers would like to have several different people evaluating them, thus receiving feedback from more than from the principal alone. It is very difficult for one individual to successfully accomplish both formative and summative goals. Teachers are most likely to welcome an evaluative process if its major focus is to help rather than to find fault. Principals have a basic role conflict of interest and the adverse effects of being the only evaluator in a school become obvious when a principal attempts to use both summative and formative strategies.

Teacher Involvement

Teachers recommended involvement of supervisors of special areas like special education, art, world language and music in the evaluation process, as well as teacher involvement in designing the evaluation, data assembly, adequacy of judgments, and the use of evaluation results. Teachers know the key indicators of impact for their own case. Thus they are able to select the best combination of data sources for their own evaluation. Their participation enhances accuracy and appropriateness of evidence used to judge them.

Major Findings for Research Objective 3:

To analyze degrees to which evaluation of instruction is intended to provide information that teachers may use to increase student learning

A careful study of the teacher evaluation documents from *Target Schools* presented the following findings.

Increased Span of Evaluation Cycles

The teacher evaluation documents showed a tendency in that the evaluation cycle of teachers with professional status is getting longer and longer from every other year to five years. The longer cycles have clear objectives for each year and the teachers are clear about the objectives, ways to achieve the objectives for a specific year and the criteria on which they are to be evaluated. The cycles allow the teachers more time to collaborate with other teachers, observe each other in the classroom, and provide feedback for improving teaching effectiveness. The cycles also make it possible for teachers to reflect on their performance and their own professional development. Non-tenured teachers are evaluated annually to determine if the teacher will be re-appointed. Only in one school, non-tenured teachers follow a three-year cycle with written evaluations decreasing as year goes on.

More Sources for Data Collection.

Observation is the main form for data collection. Evaluation consists of formal and informal observations of teaching or other work performance. Two schools utilize the clinical supervision model for its data collection. Lesson plans, objectives, and textbooks need to be available. The time requirement for observation is at least 15 minutes in one school and the full class in another. The post-observation conference needs to take place within 5-10 days of the last observation. Three schools use multiple sources of information about performance besides formal and informal observations. This ensures that the process does not rely on classroom observation as the sole basis for evaluation.

Instruction

One unanimous feature is that the evaluation systems in these schools share similar or identical categories in the evaluation process. All schools list instruction as a distinctive category of evaluation of instruction, stated clearly as the purpose of teacher evaluation.

Planning & Assessment of Curriculum & Instruction

Effective planning and assessment of curriculum and instruction is another category shared by all schools. This includes planning and implementing a variety of activities consistent with instructional objectives, and selecting instructional methods compatible with student abilities and learning styles. Objectives chosen should be appropriate for the mental age, maturity and skill level of the pupils in the

class and consistent with the established district curriculum. The teacher should apply a knowledge base of learning the theories of teaching and perceive need of both individuals and the group.

Student Learning

Student learning permeates the evaluation categories across all the schools. In evaluating teaching, student learning is the clear goal. The teacher is expected to plan assessment of student learning effectively and create a positive environment for student learning and involvement.

Improvement Assistance Plan

All schools have an improvement assistance plan in their teacher evaluation contract. For each formal observation, the evaluator will provide a document identifying areas of strength and areas needing improvement, based on the established criteria and goals. Also, the evaluator will provide specific recommendations on how to improve and where the teacher can get assistance to implement the recommendations. There should be a reasonable time schedule to monitor progress where evaluator and teacher meet to review progress made on the improvement plan. However, some teachers believed that the assistance plans were for teachers "at risk", and not for all teachers.

Peer Coaching

As an alternative to formal principal evaluation of teachers, peer coaching is introduced to more schools although worded in different ways such as observation and collaboration. Teachers with professional status may request to substitute a Peer Coaching process for their negotiated evaluation in a given year, but not in consecutive evaluation cycles, by using the clinical supervision techniques. It is the practice of two experienced teachers working together to refine teachings and / or implement change in teaching strategies. It helps to engage the teachers in self-analysis and helps both peer coach and teacher to think more about their work.

Major Findings for Research Objective 4:

To identify similarities and differences in principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the current effectiveness of evaluation in helping teachers improve student learning

Principals and teachers from *Target Schools* were asked to identify both the most effective parts and the least effective parts in teacher evaluation in their schools. The findings were presented in the two categories.

Most Effective Aspects in Teacher Evaluation

Goal Setting

Three principals (60%) considered goal setting as one of the most effective parts in teacher evaluation. They enjoyed the opportunity of working with teachers to set personal professional goals in conjunction with school goals. Five teachers agreed with the three principals. Teachers set tangible goals with input from the principal and were evaluated based on the goals discussed.

Pre- and Post-observation Conferences

Four principals (80%) agreed that the pre-observation and post-observation conferences were also effective where teachers and principal talked about teaching and learning to be observed, provided feedback for improvement after observation, and conducted summary evaluation. Thirty-five teachers (83%) from five schools agreed that the conferences with the principal were most effective. Teachers appreciated the support, feedback, and suggestions they received on areas of improvement in building confidence in their instructional techniques to benefit students.

Peer Coaching

Peer coaching among teachers was also considered effective, which provided the opportunity for teachers to observe each other, learn from each other in improving teaching strategies to teach to different learning styles so that student can learn more effectively. Peer coaching encouraged collaboration with colleagues and opportunities it provided for teachers to take courses, workshop, conferences and visiting other schools.

Least Effective Aspects in Teacher Evaluation in Their Schools

Time Restraint

Two principals expressed their displeasure at the timeline for the completion of observation and conference schedule, which is mandated by the contract. One principal considered lack of time on part

of the principal as the least effective, who was joined by another principal complaining the number of categories that must be addressed and the number of evaluations that must be done each year. One principal thought that the frequency for evaluating teachers should be increased, instead of evaluating professional status teachers every other year, because two much time was in between evaluations. Another principal lamented that since teacher evaluation process was a contract item, it was a major obstacle to improving teaching and learning. A third principal considered teachers' self-evaluation form the least effective, which was supported by a few teachers.

Feedback from Principal Only

Teachers were concerned about the fact that they received feedback from only one person regarding their performance and principals were limited as to their input or as a resource person for certain subjects or fields. The principal was busy with so many tasks that he or she did not have enough time to spend in the classroom to find out what is happening. Also, the principal was not that resourceful in feedback especially in subjects as music, world language, etc. while involvement of the head teachers of these departments would help the process and teachers get more useful and relevant feedback.

Infrequency of Observations

Teachers considered the infrequency of observations as least effective and suggested that there should be frequent and longer classroom visits, for short and rare observations did not really increase student learning. Formal classroom observations limit what an evaluator observes. Teachers did not like checklist or scales without comments or discussions because of its subjective nature of checklists. The lessons were "staged" for the benefit of the principal and not for authentic teaching. Evaluation for school procedures, regulations and assignments are for teacher evaluation and not so much for improvement of student learning.

Recommendations

A careful analysis of the research findings results in recommendations of four types: Recommendations for School Principals, Recommendations for School Systems, Recommendations for Teachers, and Recommendations for Schools of Education.

Recommendations for School Principals

Three major recommendations are advanced for school principals to consider for improving teacher evaluation in their schools.

1. Principals should downplay classroom observations and also use more than one person to judge the quality of teacher performance. In most schools, the principal is the only person responsible for evaluating teachers. The adverse effects of being the only evaluator in a school become obvious when a principal experiences the potential conflict between leading instructional improvement and the need to make administrative decisions. Trying to resolve these conflicts has not necessarily improved teaching. Yet, it is not impossible to achieve both purposes at the same time.

Principals are on the spot when quick judgments are needed to stop abusive and acute problems resulting from teacher practices. They are in the best position to see the overall teaching picture in relation to students, parents, school boards, and district policy. A principal's efforts to improve teachers' classroom performance should be linked constructively to administrative decisions on promotions and tenure. The evaluation process should recognize and reward those teachers who facilitate student learning. This process should also reveal those teachers whose pedagogical skills are deficient and who require improvement. The present research, however, indicates that several obstacles prevent instructional improvement and supervisory practices from working compatibly. Principals have a basic conflict of interest when they are both summative judges and educational leaders with the same population of teachers. Their perceptions and biases are shaped by their administrative role assignment in the school. Sociologists describe a delicate balance of support and control that principals face in a school. The result is that evaluation and resulting decisions become tools for overall administrative control rather than accurate and useful judgments of teacher quality. Principals consider teacher evaluation as their least favored responsibility--- they are not motivated to do a thorough job of it.

2. An evaluation study team should be set up at the local school level with the charge of reviewing procedures of the current teacher evaluation system and making suggestions for improvement. This group will be chaired by the principal and composed of teacher representatives. They should examine how teacher evaluation can better improve instruction and increase student learning. The study team can obtain more knowledge about how teachers and principals are affected by evaluation and how they perceive their current job performance. The study team should identify helpful procedures for reviewing teacher performance and meaningful criteria for determining quality of

teaching. Teachers respond more favorably to a positive approach with multiple sources of data for judging the quality of teaching.

3. Teachers should be encouraged to evaluate principals. This is likely to establish a sense of equality and a tone of collaboration for learning from each other. Teachers evaluating principals will bring constructive attention to the evaluation process as a means for strengthening performance and increasing student learning.

Recommendation to the School Systems

There are five basic recommendations for school systems to consider when improving evaluation.

1. Provide teacher evaluation training for principals and teachers. Since each school in a specific school system uses the same teacher evaluation instrument and follows the same procedures, it is imperative that the school system provides training in the use of the evaluation tools and procedures for principals and teachers. Awareness of the purpose and potential uses of evaluation creates greater commitment and motivation on the part of teachers to take evaluation seriously and do their best work to help students learn well. The school system can tie the evaluation training of principals to professional development. Too often, educators do not know how to go about designing or conducting an evaluation. With careful nurturing and innovative leadership, the school staff can indeed gain a capacity for evaluating their own effectiveness. Teachers and principals together are likely to see that evaluation is a key to unlocking the problems that hinder too many young people from succeeding in school. Once professional educators are convinced that they have the responsibility and authority to evaluate conditions for learning in their school, they find the time, develop the skills, and take the lead for determining how well their children learn what the school is expected to teach.

2. A task force led by central office administrators should be set up to review the current evaluation system and determine suggestions from principals and teachers in order to make necessary changes in evaluation to improve teaching and learning. Evaluation must be closely tied to desired learning and should serve student learning. This principle of evaluation suggests that results help educators at all levels of the enterprise consider the extent to which students are accomplishing desired learning and propose changes in curriculum and instruction that may foster even more effective learning (Ghory and Sinclair, 1997).

3. School systems should emphasize the function of teacher evaluation to acknowledge the good teaching that already exists. Too often evaluation only emphasizes future improvement and accountability. Only ten principals in the present study identified documenting exemplary teachers as one of the major purposes of evaluation. Recognizing existing quality should be as important as providing information to improve teaching. Educators who indeed know that good teaching is going on need to put their knowledge on the evaluation line. The public needs to get the message and data about the total quality of teacher performance in their local schools. Recognition of high quality teaching is rare and unfortunately seldom come about as a result of current evaluation procedures used by most school systems.

4. Use teacher self-evaluation as another data source to support judgement about teacher effectiveness. It is generally believed that good teachers tend to underrate themselves, while poor teachers tend to overrate themselves. However, when used together with data from other sources, self-evaluation can be a useful part of teacher evaluation. Ideally, encouraging teachers to continually monitor their strengths and weaknesses can provide an ongoing source of information and feedback about instruction. Self-evaluation can relieve some of the principal's burden and encourage professionalism among the teachers.

5. Spend the time needed to recognize good teaching and identifying improvements. Current practice is for principals to spend a short amount of time observing teachers by visiting a classroom for about 45 minutes. Good evaluation takes much more time than a short observation. Good teachers are good for various reasons. Teachers can make learning happen in quite different ways. Teaching can be quite personal and idiosyncratic, creative, emotionally demanding, and intellectually complex. Teaching effectiveness depends on the specific situation. Hence, teachers of different kinds in different settings need evaluations that are appropriate to their specific practice. This takes substantial time that is well spent if evaluation is to become a positive means for improving teaching and increasing learning.

Recommendations for Teachers

Three constructive recommendations are proposed for teachers in improving teacher evaluation in their local schools:

1. Teachers should increase their involvement in the process of evaluation in their local schools and school systems. They should collaborate with the principal to design evaluation so that it better serves the purpose of improving instruction and increasing student learning. The current research shows

that teachers in only one *Target School* were involved in changing the evaluation design. Too often present practice is to impose on the teacher a brief visit by a person having little meaningful contact with the classroom or students who summarizes the visit on a generalized checklist. The teacher is usually a passive participant in current evaluation practice.

Teachers should stand at the center of evaluation activity. One main reason for their involvement is that teachers are in the best position to know the key indicators of increased student learning. Their participation enhances the accuracy and appropriateness of evidence used to judge the effectiveness of their teaching.

2. Teachers should be involved in the evaluation of their colleagues. Peer coaching or mentoring is highly recommended as a constructive change in teacher evaluation. Simply put, teachers should be involved in the evaluation of other teachers. Peer evaluation is a practice that is common to many professions.

3. Thoughtful and resourceful teachers should create effective ways to evaluate the progress children are making in their learning in local school settings. In individual classrooms and schools, educators find that results of learning in the local school may be used to create conditions that help young people realize their potential in learning. These results provide teachers with useful information that they can use for decisions to alter conditions for learning that hinder learning and maintain aspects of the setting that are conducive to increased learning. Teachers making decisions for improved instructions and increased student learning by using data from the local school should be encouraged.

Educators who are concerned about reaching and teaching all children tend to place evaluation in the service of learning. Successful teachers and effective principals view learning as the practice of independent problem solving (Ghory and Sinclair, 1997). Teachers value self-directed learning over conditioning. They encourage students to construct their own views of knowledge, to define personally meaningful questions, and to develop creative responses to problems they uncover. Teachers should have a clear understanding of their students' strengths and weaknesses and a view about how learning takes place. Teachers' way of thinking about learning influences the way teachers evaluate the progress of their students. The purpose of evaluation is to understand better the progress students are making in their learning and the conditions that help or hinder their accomplishments in local schools.

Recommendations for Schools of Education

Two modest recommendations are advanced for schools of education to better prepare principals and teachers for teacher evaluation:

1. Schools of education are responsible for preparing future and practicing principals to take leadership roles in teacher evaluation and school reform. Courses should be carefully set up so that principals have a clear sense of the purposes of teacher evaluation and how to design and conduct teacher evaluations to improve instruction and learning. It is crucial to avoid advancing a single model for teacher evaluation to be implemented in every school. Instead of seeking one common solution to the complex problem of evaluation, educators should start by identifying practical challenges that promote spirited dialogue and encourage thoughtful decisions about improvement of instruction and learning (Ghory and Sinclair, 1997). Each school of education faculty is to act as a community of scholars who help teachers and principals tackle these challenges and make their own plans for constructive evaluation.

2. Prospective teachers should be taught how to evaluate themselves and use evaluation results to change their behavior and improve student achievement. The major constructive purpose of evaluation is to improve learning, not to prove that a specific program works well or poorly or that students of a particular group perform better or worse than others (Ghory and Sinclair, 1997). Successful evaluation allows teachers, students, and parents to identify and understand conditions that hinder or foster learning. A careful examination of evaluation results should provide a deeper understanding of what needs to be done to improve conditions in school and at home so that learning will take place. Teachers and principals should leave the school of education with a clear understanding that their purpose is to help children learn. Evaluation should be linked to attacking problems and helping all children succeed in school.

Closing

The present study, then, contributed to the understanding of the extent to which current teacher evaluations were intended to improve instruction and increase student learning. The research elicited perceptions from elementary school principals and teachers regarding purposes and designs of teacher evaluation systems and if they were intended to improve student learning. The participants were also asked to identify the most and least effective aspects of their school's evaluation process and to put

forward their recommendations for change in the evaluation system to make it even more effective in increasing student learning.

The major findings of the study showed that teacher evaluations are perceived as a means for accountability, teacher effectiveness, and improvement of curriculum. Only 7 out of 39 principals (20.59%) believed that the purpose of teacher evaluation was to improve student achievement and enhance student learning. Teachers and principals from *Target Schools*, however, were more focused on evaluation for improvement of student learning. Many of these 42 teachers talked about evaluation to meet the diverse needs of the students. Improvement of instruction was a unanimous priority of evaluation espoused by sampled principals. The written documents describing evaluation procedures that were collected from the schools, though worded in different ways, all claimed that the purpose of teacher evaluation is to improve instruction. Yet, the performance indicators for affecting teaching described in these documents strongly focused on increasing student learning by way of improving instruction.

Teachers and principals agreed that procedures for conducting teacher evaluation in the school were clearly stated. Yet, teachers differed in their perceptions regarding teacher involvement in implementing evaluation. Principals and teachers considered multiple goal setting and teacher-principal conferences leading to improvement of curriculum and instruction as the most effective parts of existing evaluations. Teachers would like more people to be involved in the evaluation of their performance. Receiving feedback from the principal alone was considered inadequate. Peer coaching was strongly advocated. Teachers and principals responded negatively to the claim that teacher evaluation helped identify students with special learning needs. Principals would like to spend more time with teachers and teachers would like to see their principals more often in their classroom rather than the common once a year quick visit to evaluate their total performance.

Public schools are responsible for helping all children learn well and realize their promise so that they are better prepared for constructive participation in society. To realize this end, it is necessary to evaluate teachers and use the results to improve their skills for creating conditions to increase student learning. Now the crucial challenge is to make teacher evaluation an even more powerful means for improving instruction and increasing student learning. Through meaningful evaluation, teachers may become more effective in reaching and teaching all children of all families.

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